



Proposed Stormwater Utility

March 28, 2017



What is a Stormwater Utility

A Stormwater Utility is similar to any other utility such as water, sewer, electric, or gas that charges a user fee for service.





Why a Stormwater Utility?

A Stormwater Utility will help achieve permit compliance, and allow the preservation, protection, and improved management of our water resources for future generations.

- The community has 30 miles of shoreline, 107 miles of streams and rivers, 232 acres of inland waters, and 3,429 acres of wetlands.
- The U.S. EPA has listed Sunderland and Morehouse Brook as being impaired by stormwater.
- The community's smaller brooks have phosphorus levels well above the recommended standards.
- Malletts Bay has phosphorus levels that exceed the allowable limits for these waters.
- Run off from the Town's 13 miles of gravel roads is a significant source of pollution to receiving water
- The Town is required by permit to address these water quality issues.





Why a Stormwater Utility?

A Stormwater Utility will address inadequate and failing drainage systems.

- Currently approximately \$35 million in needed stormwater improvements have been identified.
 - Malletts Bay Stormwater System
 - Sunderland and Morehouse Brook
 - 13 miles of gravel roads
 - Aging and failing drainage systems
 - Areas with no stormwater management

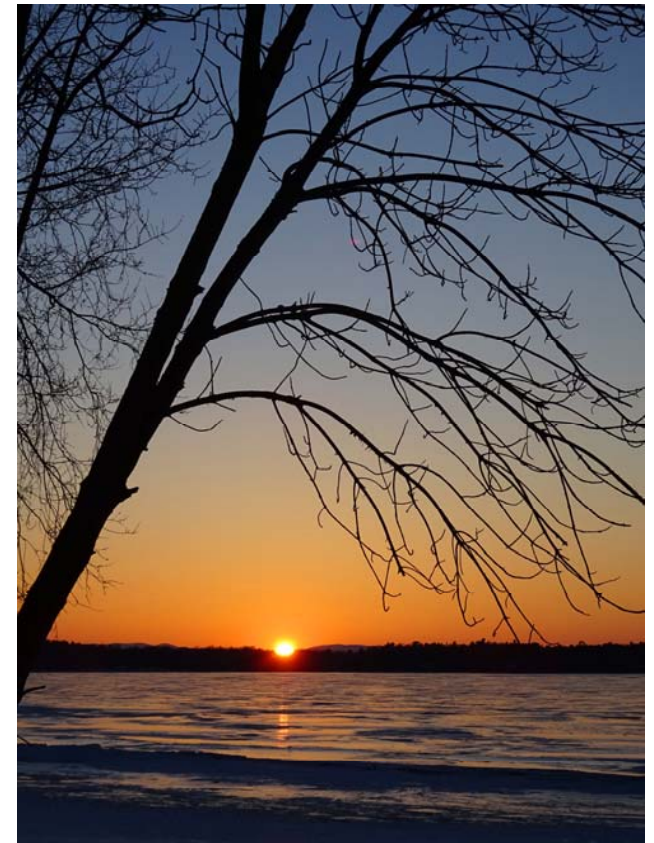




Why a Stormwater Utility?

A Stormwater Utility provides a more equitable user fee system to property owners.

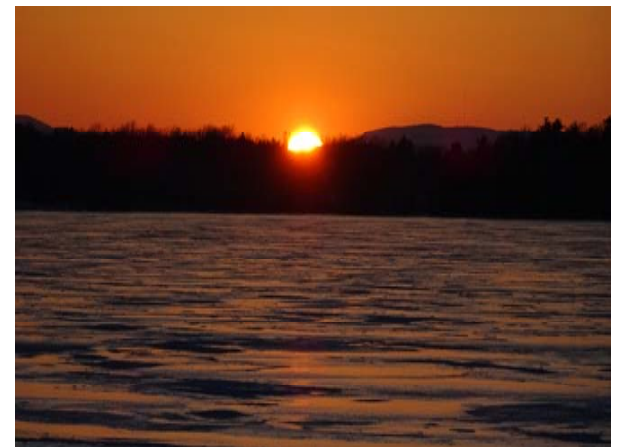
- Currently charges are based on the assessed value of a property.
- There is no relationship between the value of a property and how much stormwater drains off the property.
- Stormwater runoff is based on the amount of impervious surface.
- A stormwater utility estimates runoff based on Equivalent Residential Units, (ERU's)
- Currently properties that are exempt from property taxes do not contribute to the community's stormwater costs.





How did we get here?

- Water quality has been a focus in Colchester for a very long time.
- In 2009, the Town received a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. EPA to conduct an Integrated Water Resources Management Study. The study took four years to complete and included a total of 16 public meetings. Several recommendations were developed, including the creation of a Stormwater Utility.
- In 2015, the Stormwater Advisory Committee, (SWAC) was formed, consisting of 11 Colchester citizens. They represented residents, businesses, institutions, and environmental interests. Also included on the SWAC was a member of the Selectboard, Planning Commission, and Conservation Commission.
- The SWAC has worked with Town staff for the past 18 months developing the stormwater utility.





Is this a new idea?

There are over 2,000 utilities across the United States, and there are three other stormwater utilities in Vermont: Burlington (2009), South Burlington (2010), and Williston (2015).



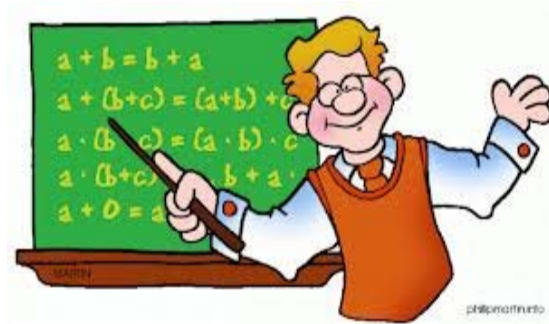


How does all of this work?



Let's start with the basics

What is an ERU?



- Equivalent Residential Unit
- Minimum unit of measurement designed to equitably distribute the costs of stormwater
- The total impervious surfaces for all single family residential properties are averaged. The average square footage in Colchester is 4,356 sq. ft.
- One ERU = 4,356 sq. ft. of impervious surface





That's about:

- 81 million sq. ft., or
- 1,862 acres, or
- 2.9 square miles

of impervious surfaces

Impervious Surfaces are defined as those that cannot infiltrate rainfall.





Will all properties pay a stormwater fee?

Yes all properties will pay stormwater fees. These include:

- Single family properties
- Non-single family properties
- Properties exempt from property taxes
- Town and state property including roads
- Undeveloped land with or without impervious surface will pay at least a minimum charge of 1 ERU



How are ERU's used to determine my bill?

Single family residential properties will pay a flat fee of one ERU.

Single family properties generally include;

- Single family homes
- Duplexes
- Triplexes

Or any combination of the above that;

- Do not exceed three dwelling units
- Have less than one acre of impervious surface





How are ERU's used to determine my bill?

Non-single family residential properties will be directly assessed. This means that the total impervious square footage will be divided by one ERU to determine the total number of ERU's on the property. (Example, 17,000 sq. ft. /4,356 sq. ft. = 3.90 or 4.0 ERU's.)

Non-single family properties generally include;

- Commercial or industrial properties
- Not-for-profit properties
- Educational institutions
- Mobile Home Parks
- Agricultural properties
- Town and state roads and property
- All other properties not meeting the definition of single family residential





How much does an ERU cost?

An ERU costs \$52.39 per year.

Here is how we determine that number:

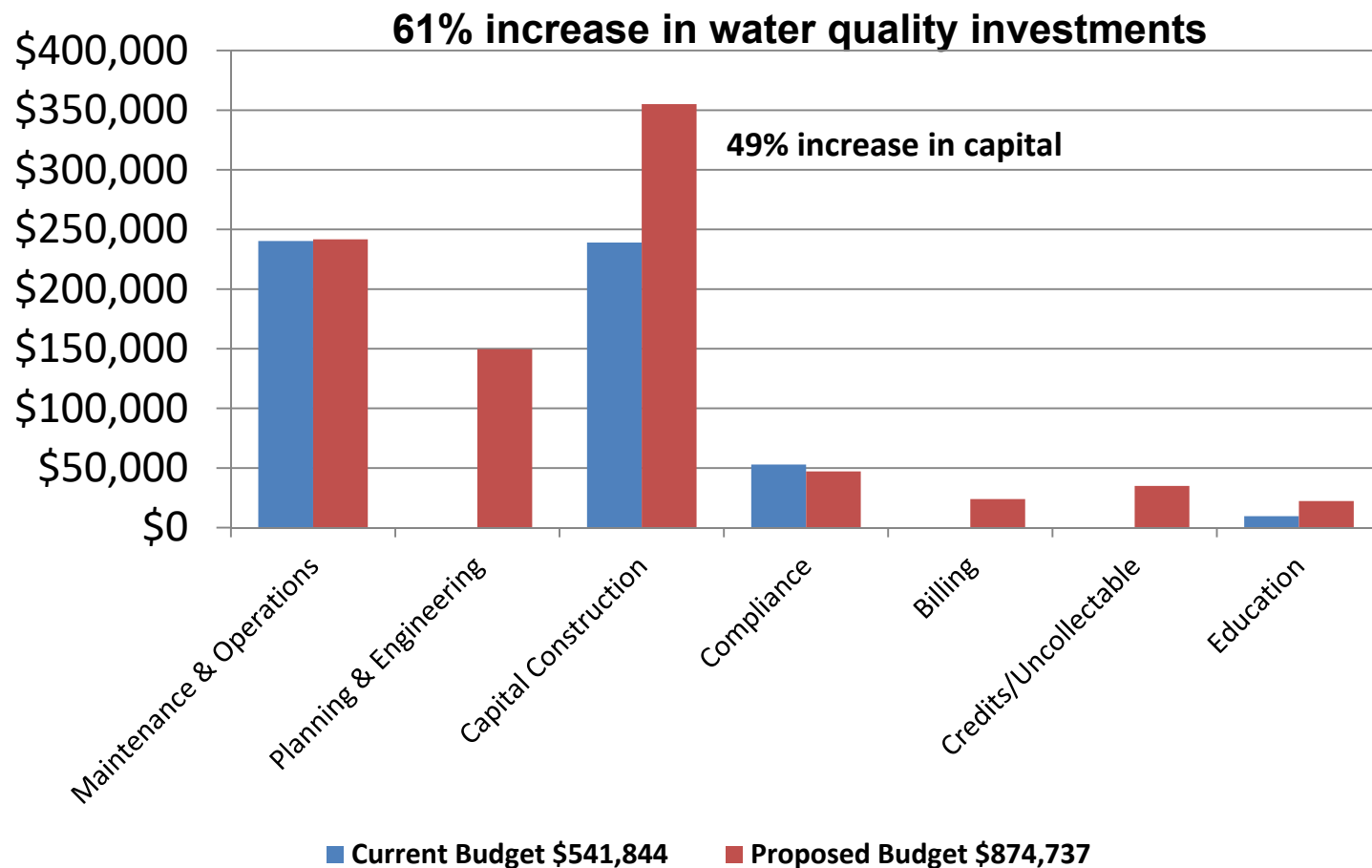
1. First we need to adjust our total ERU's for program credits we plan on issuing. This reduces our total ERU's from 18,620 to 16,696. (More on credits later)
2. We divide our proposed program budget of \$874,737 by our adjusted ERU's of 16,696 and get \$52.39.





Program Budget

Current vs. Proposed





The ERU at work

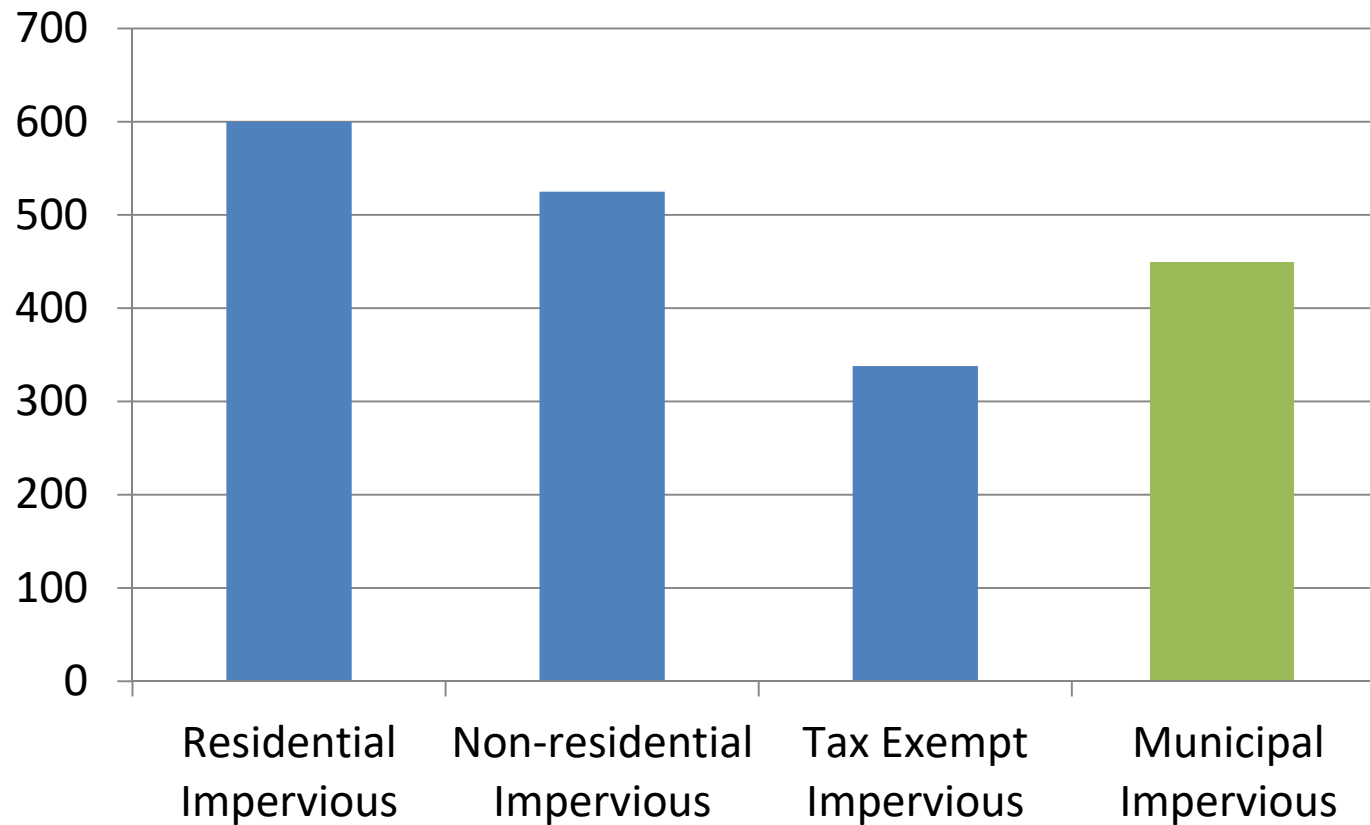


“A Stormwater Utility provides a more equitable user fee system to property owners.”



Impervious Surfaces

Square Acres

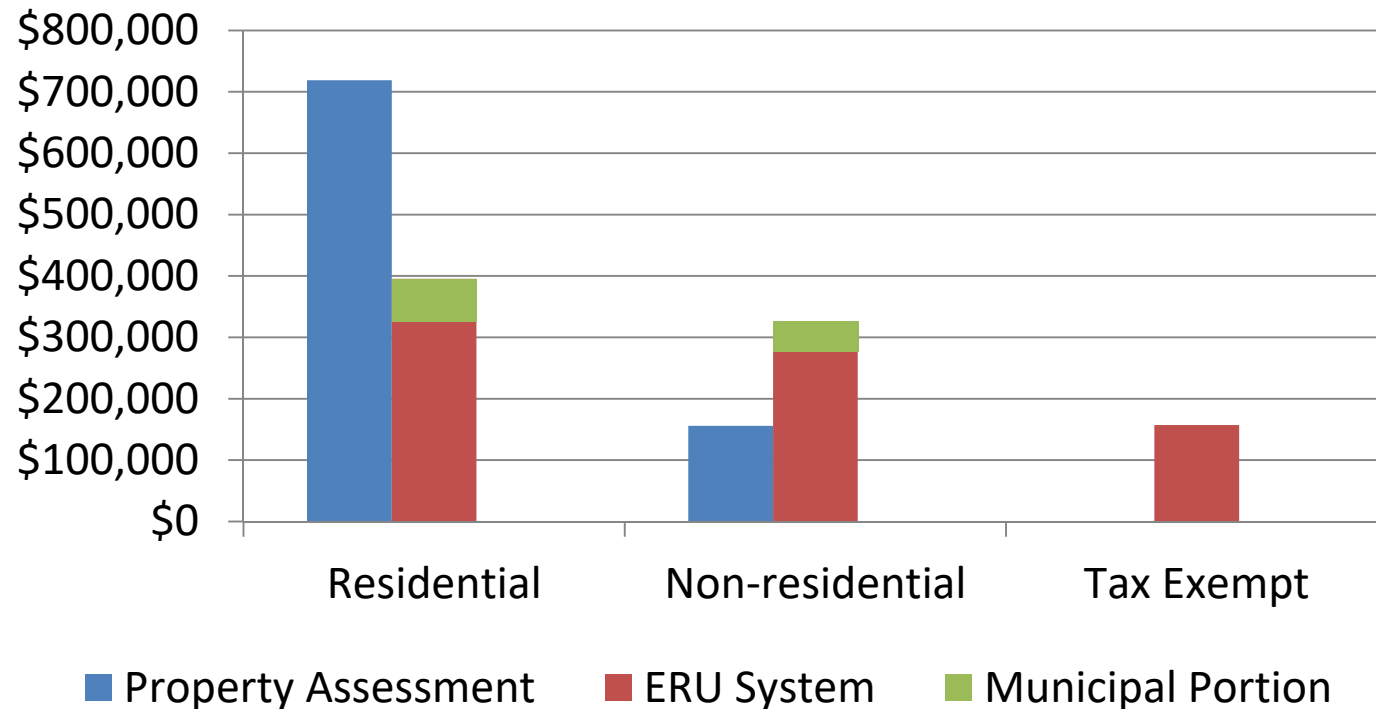


"Stormwater runoff is based on the amount of impervious surface."



Proposed Stormwater Costs

Cost Distribution
Property Assessment vs. ERU System





How does this compare to what I currently pay?

Single Family Residential Properties, (SFR) Annual costs for a \$275,000 home

Property	Current Property Taxes	Proposed Property Taxes	Proposed Stormwater Fees	Proposed Total Costs	Total Change
SFR	\$71.81	\$18.73	\$52.39	\$71.12	(\$0.69)

Note: The Town will not be exempt from paying stormwater fees for roads, parking lots, buildings and other impervious surfaces. Some monies will still need to be raised through taxes to pay these fees.



How does this compare to what I currently pay?

Non-single Family Residential Properties

The difference in costs for non-single family residential properties will vary depending upon the assessed value of the property and the amount of impervious surface on the property. A searchable database will be available at <http://colchestervt.gov/213/Managing-Stormwater> beginning on March 15, 2017 where the costs to all Town properties can be viewed.



Top 10 Colchester Employers

Property	Current Property Taxes	Proposed Property Taxes	Proposed Stormwater Fees	Proposed Total Costs	Total Change
Green Mountain Power	\$2,127	\$526	\$4,254	\$4,780	\$2,653
Visiting Nurse Association	\$0	\$0	\$1,313	\$1,313	\$1,313
Saint Michael's College	\$0	\$0	\$29,306	\$29,306	\$29,306
Champlain Cable	\$1,363	\$337	\$4,464	\$4,801	\$3,438
Hazelett Strip Casting	\$1,843	\$456	\$3,834	\$4,290	\$2,447
Engelberth Construction	\$2,143	\$530	\$1,207	\$1,738	(\$405)
Vermont Information Processing	\$3,017	\$746	\$1,576	\$2,322	(\$695)
Costco	\$2,591	\$641	\$4,989	\$5,630	\$3,039
Coca Cola	\$846	\$209	\$3,151	\$3,361	\$2,514
UVM Medical Center	\$0	\$0	\$6,040	\$6,040	\$6,040



Other Significant Non-residential Properties

Property	Current Property Taxes to SW	Proposed Property Taxes to SW	Proposed Stormwater Fees	Proposed Total Costs	Total Change
Town Roads	\$0	\$0	\$122,865	\$122,865	\$122,865
Town Facilities	\$0	\$0	\$11,264	\$11,264	\$11,264
VTrans	\$0	\$0	\$59,116	\$59,116	\$59,116
Other State Entities	\$0	\$0	\$15,966	\$15,966	\$15,996
Mobile Home Parks (Avg.)	\$563	\$140	\$3,395	\$3,534	\$2,971
Churches (Avg.)	\$0	\$0	\$485	\$485	\$485
Colchester School District	\$0	\$0	\$10,257	\$10,257	\$10,257



Unique Situations

Once the database was formulated, some unique situations were observed within the following property categories:

- Mobile Home Parks
- “Outlier” Single Family properties
- Residential Developments with Homeowner’s or
Condominium Associations

Unique Situations – Mobile Home Parks

Under the initial method –

77 ERUs for mobile homes
+ 21 for underlying impervious
98 ERUs total for this site

98 ERUs * .1 acre = 9.8 acres of
impervious being charged for, or **\$5,134**
(site is only 6.57 acres)

Staff proposed to move MH parks to
directly assessed category, resulting in:

28 ERUs * .1 acre = 2.8 acres of
impervious being charged for, bill goes
to park owner for **\$1,467**

Difference in methods: - (**\$3,667**)



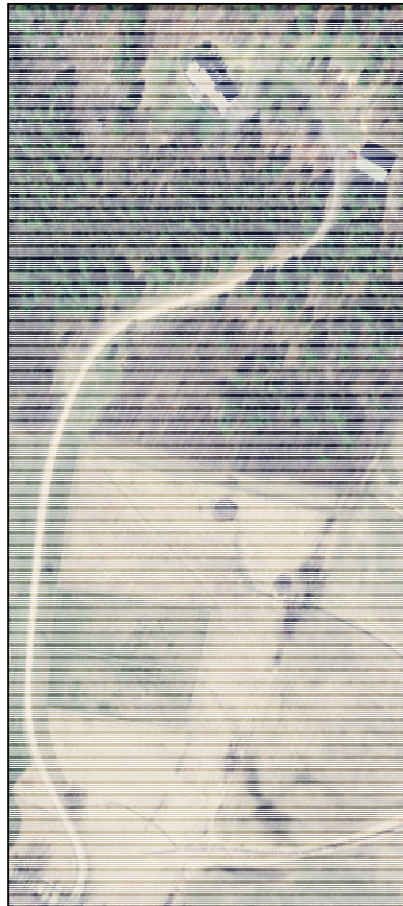
Windemere Estates park on Mt Mansfield Avenue: 77 units, 6.57 acres



Colchester
VERMONT

Unique Situations – Outlier SF Property

28 properties seen in the single family property category with over 1 acre of impervious, and some properties with over 3 acres



- Outliers brought up the overall residential average, and are generally associated with agricultural properties and long driveways
- Initially proposed to directly assess these sites, making them credit eligible, for a total of 428 ERUs
- Caused significant increases in bills for these sites, with some going from 1ERU (\$53) to 30ERUs (\$1,571)
- Compromised by capping sites at 10 ERUs instead, with each property paying \$523 each, for 280 ERUs total



Unique Situations – Ownership ?

Many homeowner's or condominium associations own properties with impervious surfaces, such as parking areas, carports, driveways, or playgrounds

Town does not hold contact information for homeowner's associations

- If areas are ignored, some impervious not captured
- If assessed as own lot, would skew the average downward

Solution: Incorporate these surfaces into the amounts for each unit in development prior to overall average calculation so they accounted for under the correct ownership





What about the Credits?

- ☐ Credits are available to all non-single family residential properties
- ☐ These are typically the larger properties with significantly more impervious surface
- ☐ Credits reduce the stormwater fees for a qualifying property
- ☐ There are two different types of credits. Program credits and performance credits





Program Credits

- Program credits are available to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, (MS4's), or Transportation Separate Storm Sewer Systems, (TS4's) as designated under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, (NPDES) by the U.S. EPA.
- Program credits are also available to schools up to the High School level.

Organization	Credit	Requirements
Town of Colchester	35%	Certification of permit coverage
Vermont Agency of Transportation	35%	Certification of permit coverage
University of Vermont	10%	Certification of permit coverage
Colchester School District	10%	Certification of stormwater curriculum



Performance Credits

- Performance credits are available to all non-single family or directly assessed properties.
- Credit application and approval are required
- Maximum allowable credit is 50% of stormwater bill.

Treatment Standard	Credit Amount
Water Quality	15%
Groundwater Recharge	15%
Channel Protection	15%
Overbank Flood/Extreme Storm	10%
Non-structural Practices	10%





What will the money be used for?





Top Priorities

Phosphorus Reduction

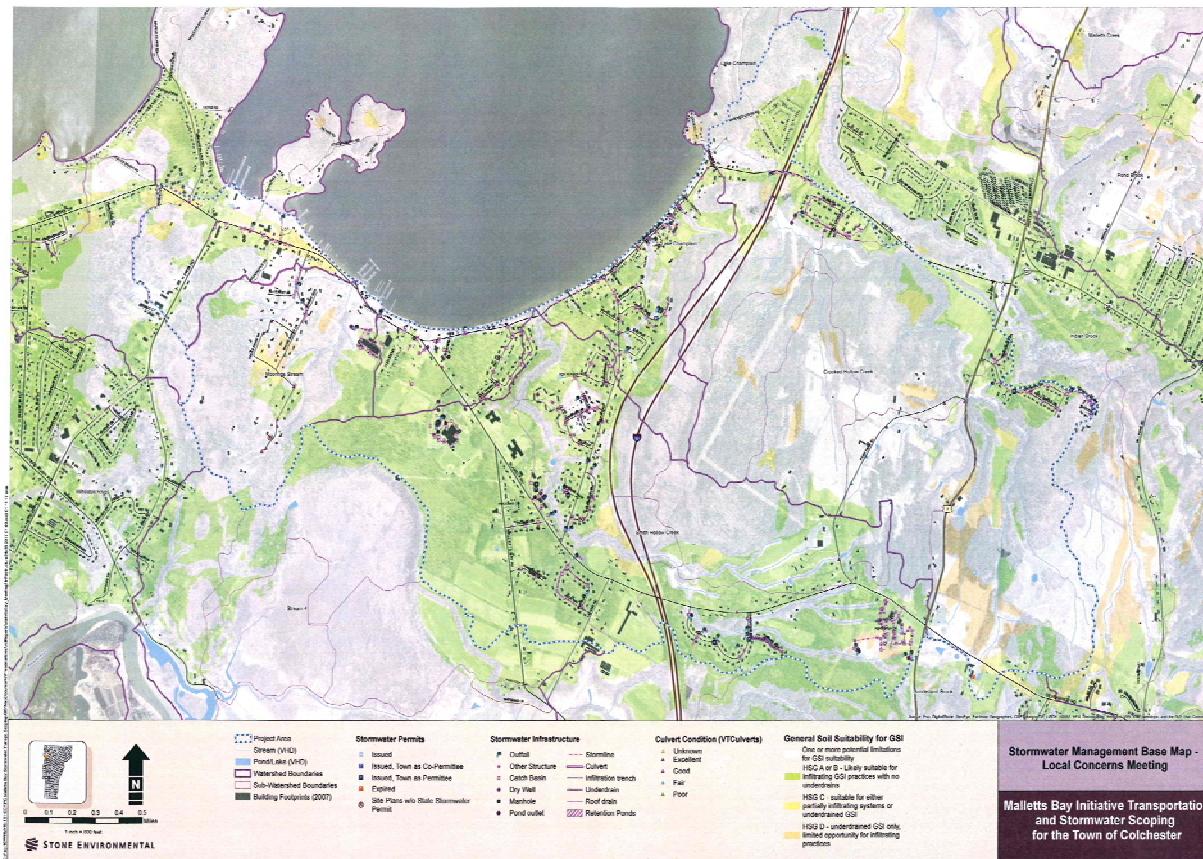
Too much phosphorus in water bodies accelerates plant growth such as algae. This in turn depletes oxygen within the water needed to support aquatic life.

Sediment Reduction

Sediment prevents natural vegetation from growing in waters, harms small organisms, fish, and other aquatic life, and transports phosphorus.

Malletts Bay Initiative

Malletts Bay Stormwater System





Malletts Bay Stormwater System



Gravel Roads

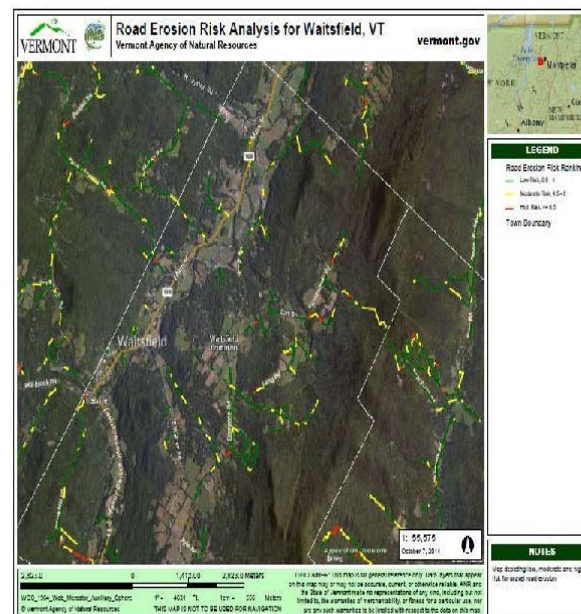
Municipal Roads General Permit

Potential Road Pollutants

- Nutrients- Phosphorus
- Sediment
- Trace heavy metals
- Hydrocarbons
- Road salt



Priority Road Segments





Why should I support a Stormwater Utility?

- A Stormwater Utility will assist with permit compliance and allow the preservation, protection, and improved management of our water resources for future generations.
- A Stormwater Utility will address inadequate and failing drainage systems.
- A Stormwater Utility provides a more equitable user fee system to property owners. A single family residential property assessed at \$275,000 will pay less under the utility with a 61% increase in investment toward water quality.

Increased capital funding, more equitable fee structure, cleaner water



Education and Outreach Efforts

- 8,000 informational flyers sent to each property in Town
- 135 letters sent to those property owners with increases greater than \$500/yr.
- Provided web site address in all flyers and letters which will contain all information related to the proposed utility
- Scheduled interviews with Burlington Free Press and Colchester Sun
- Scheduled interview with LCATV with interview placed on Front Porch Forum, Face Book, and other social media forums
- Selectboard meetings on 3/28/17 and 4/25/17.

More Information: <http://colchestervt.gov/Managing-Stormwater>



Next Steps

March 28, 2017

Selectboard informational meeting and warning of a public hearing for April 25, 2017 to consider amendments to Chapter 18 Stormwater.

April 25, 2017

Selectboard holds a public hearing to consider amendments to Chapter 18 Stormwater to authorize the creation of the utility. If authorized, the Board of Sewer Commissioners shall warn the FY18 Stormwater Budget and User Rates for a public hearing on May 23, 2017

May 23, 2017

Board of Sewer Commissioners holds a public hearing to consider adoption of the FY18 Stormwater Budget and User Fees.

July 1, 2017

Stormwater Utility begins operation if approved by the Selectboard.

More Information: <http://colchestervt.gov/Managing-Stormwater>



Questions?

Stormwater Utility FY18 Draft Budget			
Expenses	Current	Proposed	Change
Salary	\$ 92,689	\$ 153,202	\$ 60,513
Benefits	\$ 52,673	\$ 86,587	\$ 33,914
DPW Admin.	\$ 82,000	\$ 41,000	\$ (41,000)
Overhead	\$ 35,245	\$ 55,711	\$ 20,466
Billing	\$ -	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
Uncollectable Bills	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Public Education and Outreach	\$ 5,500	\$ 15,500	\$ 10,000
Credits	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Uniforms	\$ 1,865	\$ 1,865	\$ -
Catch Basins	\$ 4,250	\$ 4,250	\$ -
Sweeper Maintenance	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Water for Sweeper	\$ 788	\$ 788	\$ -
Stormwater Pumps	\$ 935	\$ 935	\$ -
Flow Monitoring	\$ 8,484	\$ 8,484	\$ -
Permitting	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -
Treatment Structures	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -
Small Tools and Equipment	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -
Culverts	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Gasoline	\$ 4,913	\$ 4,913	\$ -
Water Quality Testing	\$ 5,727	\$ 5,727	\$ -
Condition Assessment	\$ -	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000
Capital Construction	\$ 200,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 100,000
Capital Equipment	\$ 14,475	\$ 14,475	\$ -
			\$ -
Total	\$ 541,844	\$ 874,737	\$ 332,893
Revenues			
Stormwater Fees	\$ -	\$ 730,016	\$ 730,016
Property Taxes	\$ 541,844	\$ 144,721	\$ (397,123)
Total	\$ 541,844	\$ 874,737	\$ 332,893



Single Family Properties shall mean any single parcel of developed land that contains a single family home, (including mobile homes on individually owned lots), or a duplex, or a triplex, or any combination of the previous uses that does not exceed three dwelling units. Residential condominium developments with individually owned units are considered single family properties for the purpose of this ordinance. This definition includes single family properties where a legal home business/occupation exists

Non-Single Family Property shall mean any single parcel of developed land with impervious surfaces that is not a single family property as defined herein. This includes but is not limited to: professional condominium developments, residential properties with more than three units such as four-plexes and apartment buildings, not-for-profit properties, commercial and industrial properties, mobile home parks, educational institution sites, agricultural properties, public properties including roadways, parks and recreation sites, parking lots and storage sites, and hospitals and nursing homes.

